

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
OMB-01 COME-00 XMB-02 TRSE-00 EB-08 IO-13 /090 W
-----043137 260926Z /10

R 260859Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9105
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 11595

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: JA, KS
SUBJECT: JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS

REF: SEOUL 5263

1. IN JUNE 23 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, MOFA KOREAN DIVISION OFFICERS REVIEWED ISSUES IN JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS FOLLOWING PASSAGE OF CONTINENTAL SHELF LEGISLATION.
 2. TAKESHIMA/DOKTO: WITH RATIFICATION OF CONTINENTAL SHELF LEGISLATION, MOFA OFFICERS EXPECTED RENEWED ATTENTION TO QUESTION OF TAKESHIMA/DOKTO, WITH IMPETUS COMING MORE FROM TOKYO THAN FROM SEOUL. THEY SAID THAT DURING FINAL STAGES OF DIET DEBATE ON SHELF LEGISLATION, GOVERNMENT HAD PROMISED MODERATE OPPOSITION PARTIES TO REOPEN QUESTION WITH ROK, IN RETURN FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR LEGISLATION. WITH DIET CURRENTLY RECESSED, GOJ WOULD HAVE BREATHING SPELL, BUT UPON CONVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY DIET SESSION IN FALL, ATTENTION WAS CERTAIN TO TURN TO TAKESHIMA/DOKTO, AND QUESTIONS WOULD BE RAISED CONCERNING WHAT MOFA HAD
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DONE IN INTERIM TO ADVANCE JAPANESE CLAIM. MOFA WAS CONSIDERING HOW TO ADDRESS SITUATION IN LEAST DISRUPTIVE FASHION. (ONE OFFICER RECALLED THAT DURING DISCUSSION OF TAKESHIMA/DOKTO IN FINAL STAGES OF NORMALIZATION NEGOTIATIONS 13 YEARS AGO, THEN FOREIGN MINISTER SHIINA HAD SUGGESTED, ONLY HALF FACETIOUSLY, THAT BEST SOLUTION FOR BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE TO BLOW UP ISLAND.)

3. JAPAN-ROK MINISTERIAL MEETING: MOFA OFFICER SAID THERE WAS NO SUBSTANCE TO PRESS REPORT THAT JAPAN SIDE WOULD SEEK POSTPONEMENT OF ANNUAL JAPAN-ROK MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AS GESTURE RELATING TO TAKESHIMA/DOKTO. MINISTERIAL WOULD TAKE PLACE IN LATE AUGUST OR EARLY SEPTEMBER.

4. JAPAN-DPRK: MOFA OFFICERS NOTED THAT LDP DIETMAN CHUJI KUNO AND SIX MEMBER MULTI-PARTY DELEGATION WERE TO LEAVE THAT DAY FOR PYONGYANG VIA PEKING. THEY SAW NO UNUSUAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THIS YEAR'S KUNO MISSION. IT WAS ASSUMED THAT ONLY SUBSTANTIVE RESULT WOULD BE ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXTENSION OF PRIVATE JAPAN-DPRK FISHERIES AGREEMENT WHICH HAD BEEN ARRIVED AT ONE YEAR AGO. (DURING JSP CHAIRMAN ASUKATA'S PYONGYANG VISIT IN MAY, NORTH KOREANS SAID AGREEMENT WOULD BE EXTENDED.)

5. MOFA OFFICERS NOTED THAT INDEPENDENT DIET MEMBER TOKUMA UTSUNOMIYA WAS PLANNING HIS NEXT TRIP TO PYONGYANG, AND THIS TIME HOPED TO TAKE ALONG HARDLINE, PRO-ROK FORMER LDP DIETMAN KAZUO YATSUGI. MOFA OFFICERS THOUGHT PROSPECTS FOR DPRK APPROVAL OF YATSUGI TRIP TO PYONGYANG WERE PROBABLY GOOD, AND ASSUMED THAT YATSUGI WOULD THEN FOLLOW-UP WITH EFFORT TO TAKE UTSUNOMIYA TO SEOUL. THEY FELT ROK APPROVAL FOR AN UTSUNOMIYA VISIT WAS PROBLEMATIC.

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6. MOFA OFFICERS SAID HEAD OF JAPAN-DPRK TRADE ASSOCIATION, SADEO MURAKAMI, AND DELEGATION OF INTERESTED BUSINESSMEN, WOULD BE TRAVELING TO NORTH KOREA IN JULY TO DISCUSS DEBT QUESTION. THEIR CONSIDERED VIEW, AS ALSO EXPRESSED TO EMBASSY SEOUL (REFTEL), WAS THAT MOST LIKELY OUTCOME WOULD BE LIMITED EXTENSION OF GRACE PERIOD. FINANCIAL PROBLEM FOR CERTAIN AFFECTED BUSINESSMEN, HOWEVER, WAS SEVERE, SINCE ACCORDING TO ORIGINAL AGREEMENTS NOT ONLY INTEREST BUT PRINCIPAL WAS TO HAVE BEEN REPAID BEGINNING IN 1978. WHILE MAJOR TRADING COMPANIES, NOTABLY MITSUI, WHICH HELD BULK OF PAPER, COULD ABSORB REPAYMENT DELAY, MANY RELATIVELY SMALL MANUFACTURING CONCERNS WOULD HAVE LIQUIDITY PROBLEMS. IT WAS THESE CONCERNS WHO WERE INTERESTED IN RECOVERY OF EXPORT INSURANCE. MOFA OFFICERS THOUGHT ONE POSSIBLE SOURCE OF RELIEF WOULD IN FACT BE AWARD OF EXPORT INSURANCE, PERHAPS IMPLEMENTED IN GRADUAL AND UNPUBLICIZED FASHION SO AS NOT TO HIGHLIGHT SITUATION OR CAUSE UNNECESSARY FRICTION IN JAPAN-DPRK ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP.

7. COMMENT: DIET CONSIDERATION OF CONTINENTAL-SHELF LEGISLATION IMPOSED ARTIFICIAL AND ABNORMAL TRANQUILITY ON JAPAN-ROK BILATERAL RELATIONS. WHILE SHARP RECRUDES-

CENCE OF CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING TAKESHIMA/DOKTO IS
UNDOUBTEDLY SOMETHING BOTH GOVERNMENTS WILL WISH TO
AVOID, MOFA APPARENTLY REGARDS SOME DEGREE OF RENEWED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 TOKYO 11595

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TENSION AS INEVITABLE. KOREAN EMBOFFS HERE HAVE EXPRESSED
SIMILAR CONCERN. MANSFIELD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLICIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TOKYO11595
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780264-0501
Format: TEL
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780618/aaaaapvn.tel
Line Count: 149
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7a35667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SEOUL 5263
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2201541
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS
TAGS: PEPR, JA, KS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7a35667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014